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QUESTION OF THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES, INCLUDING PALESTINE

Letter dated 21 December 1992 from the Permanent Representative of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the Chairman of the Commission on Human Rights

I have the honour to address you, on behalf of the Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, concerning the intolerable situation that Israel is creating in the occupied Arab territories in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, all the horrific details of which the entire world is witnessing on television screens during these very days on which it is celebrating the birth of Christ, who began his divine mission in Palestine as a messenger of peace and human justice.

In the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Israel is currently committing the most odious violations of the provisions of international law, United Nations resolutions and the relevant International Covenants and Geneva Conventions. It is ironic that Israeli political leaders are brazenly boasting of their defence of human rights while the Israeli judiciary is arrogating to itself the right to interpret the International Covenants and the Geneva Conventions, in whatever manner it wishes, in a transparent attempt to cover with a veil of dubious and non-existent legality the iniquitous measures which the Israeli authorities are taking, in violation of international law, against the population of the West Bank and Gaza Strip by expelling a group of Palestinians outside the borders of the territories that Israel is occupying.

Under international law, Israel, as the occupying Power, is prohibited from transferring persons living under occupation to the territory of others and from imposing iniquitous and inhuman measures on the population of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Mr. Chairman, at this most crucial moment I feel fully justified in addressing you on this vital matter in your capacity as Chairman of the Commission on Human Rights which, in accordance with its terms of reference, bears primary responsibility within the framework of the United Nations for monitoring and drawing worldwide attention to violations of human rights.

I respectfully call upon you to draw worldwide attention to this issue, as a matter of urgency, and to adopt a legal and humanitarian position in keeping with the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, international law and resolutions, the Geneva Conventions and the mandate of the Commission on Human Rights over which you are presiding.

My country's Government requests the Commission on Human Rights to condemn the expulsion measures, to demand their revocation and the elimination of their consequences, and to call upon Israel to totally refrain from such measures and to respect international law and the Geneva Convention of 1949 relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, bearing in mind Security Council resolutions 605 (1987), 607 (1988), 608 (1988), 636 (1989), 681 (1990) and 726 (1992), the report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories which was submitted to the General Assembly, and the Red Cross declarations of 18 and 19 August 1988 and 21 May 1992 on Israel's violations of the Geneva Conventions.

It is only natural that the Commission on Human Rights should add its voice to the general condemnation of Israel's conduct. I would also be grateful, Mr. Chairman, if you would circulate this letter among the members of the Commission on Human Rights as an official document.

(Signed) Fawaz Sharaf
Ambassador, Permanent Representative